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Fifty-first session
Item 3 of the provisional agenda

ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE SESSION

Letter dated 19 October 1994 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Commission on Human Rights

Pursuant to note No. 2692 dated 11 October 1994 of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1/ I would like to request that the said note be circulated as a document of the Commission on Human Rights.

(Signed) Sirous Nasseri
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

1/ See the annex to the present document.

Annex

Note dated 11 October 1994 from the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Chairman of the fiftieth session of the Commission on Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Office of the United Nations and other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights and, pursuant to its note No. 2589 dated 30 September 1994, wishes to state that no reply has yet been received to the question addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Peter Paul van Wulfften Palthe, on comments that have appeared in Dutch and other media in connection with the deliberations in the Working Group on the organization of the work of the Commission.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while requesting again a prompt response to its previous Note, reiterates that the Chairman of the Commission does not represent a country nor a group through which he has gained his post. He represents all members and participants and must therefore avoid partial and subjective interpretations of the work that takes place at the Commission as well as in the Working Group.

The proposal put forward by the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Working Group has been distributed as a document of the Working Group. In this proposal:

> Violations of human rights are included not only under one item but under three items, civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights and emergency situations.
>
> The NGOs have been accorded prime time to present their statements immediately following the report by the High Commissioner on Human Rights.

The Chairman is also fully aware that this proposal was supported by many delegations, a number of whom moved that it be used as the base.

The African Group also made a proposal following which a number of delegations moved that the three proposals, one by the Islamic Republic of Iran, one by the African Group and one by the Chairman be distributed together so that the three could serve as a basis for discussions.

The Chairman was not, for reasons that remain unclear, in favour of arranging for consultations on the three texts in order to arrive at a consensus. This is the normal procedure followed in international negotiations; a procedure that has proved its utility beyond any doubt; a procedure that requires more involvement of the Chairman and some hard work, but it does produce results.

The three proposals on the table and proposals and positions made from the floor during the Working Group on the agenda were not too far apart and could have been brought closer through consultations and normal consensus making mechanisms.

The Chairman chose and insisted only on revising minimally his own original proposal which, contrary to its stated objective, would have required at least 23 per cent, a full weeks time, in addition to the current six week period. The proposal submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran, which included all the items contained in the Chairman's proposal, was arranged such that the Commission could save nearly 18 per cent of its time as well as hundreds of pages of documents.

Insistence by the Chairman on the adoption of his own proposal and reluctance to follow usual procedures to reach consensus were the reasons that the Working Group failed to produce a rationalized agenda. The record clearly testifies to this.

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